HOUSE: Historical, Representational, Political

COURSE OBJECTIVES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

Charles Moore, in *The Place of Houses*, speculates on the idea of the home: “You bind the goods and trappings of your life together with your dreams to make a place that is uniquely your own. In doing so you build a semblance of the world you know, adding it to the community that surrounds you." In this seminar, we will consider the house typology as a connective thread through history with embedded representational imagery and political implications. We will focus our discussion in the time period from 1910 to the present, looking primarily (but not exclusively) at American examples. We will examine the various forces that define the domestic realm, and bring that larger view to specific Houston examples.

The class will be divided into three segments (historical, representational, and political/cultural), each beginning with overview lectures and discussions and followed by short readings, guest lectures, and field trips. At the end of each of the segments, students will prepare and present a concise response to one item or aspect we have discussed in seminar. The goal is to look very closely at parts of a large subject, to edit to the essentials, and to find specificity and detail in developing responses in word and image. At the end of the semester, students will propose a comprehensive hypothesis regarding a single house or group of houses where historical significance, representation, and political/cultural forces align (or collide).

Nonya Grenader

Arch 323-002, Thursday / 1:00 – 3:20pm / AH 210

SCHEDULE

Jan. 14
Lecture / Discussion: Progressions through Time and Scale, Part 1.
Readings: Steven Holl, "Foundations: American House Types" in *Pamphlet Architecture No. 9*, p. 5-6. Robert Schultz, "The Levittown Look" in *Architecture of the Everyday,* p. 182-190.
Prompt: Introducing the word/image response.

Jan.21
Review word image responses and short discussion of readings.
Lecture: Progressions through Time and Scale, Part 2. The House in Multiples and the Modern Insertion
Readings: Ester McCoy, "Case Study House #3" (Wurster and Bernardi) and "Case Study House #22" (Koenig) in *Blueprints for Modern Living: History and Legacy of the Case Study Houses*, p. 44-45, 71-72. Peter Rowe, "Houses in Gardens" in *Making a Middle Landscape,* p. 67-83.

Jan. 28
Tour: Evolving Houston neighborhoods with several house visits.
Discussion: The Modern Insertion
Reading: Lisa Gray, "Saving the Tin Houses" Houston Chronicle. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, p. 3-18.

Feb. 4
Submit a discussion question (from previous readings) to Owlspace forum.
Tour: Tin Houses and Houston's West End.
Prepare presentation for week 5: Select a single house or group of houses (with historical impact) and, in word and image, focus on an aspect, idea, or detail that is emblematic of the whole. One written page and image(s) to present to the class on Feb. 18.

Feb. 11
MFA visit: meet at Beck Building—details to be announced.
The House in Photography: MFA photo archives.
Readings: and Beatriz Colomina, "The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism" in *Sexuality and Space*, p. 98-114. Joseph Rosa, "Selling Architecture" in *A Constructed View: The Architectural Photography of Julius Shulman*, p.88-95.

Feb.18
Student Presentation: The House in History.
General Discussion: readings from the Historical section and introduction to the representational aspects of the house.
Reading: Lars Lerup, "The Nofamily House: Erasure, Repetition, and Insertion" in *Planned Assaults,* p.20-26, Robert Farris Thompson, "John Biggers's Shotguns of 1987: An American Classic" in *The Art of John Biggers,* p. 108-11
Submit a question from readings.

Feb. 25
Lecture: Representation (photography, film, painting) and the domestic window: Shulman, Hitchcock and Magritte.
Viewing: House in film: segments of Hitchcock's *North By Northwest* Wes Andersons's *Royal Tannenbaums*.

March 3 – Spring Break, No class. Submit your question (based on representation readings) on or before March 9.

March 10
Menil neighborhood—meet at Menil (back entry porch) at 10:00am
Tour: Bungalow walk, discussion of readings, Menil museum (selected works).
Prepare short presentation for March 17: Select an example of domestic representation and, in word and image, focus on an aspect, idea, or detail that distills its relationship to the house (one written page and image(s) or model).

March 17
Student Presentation: Representation of the House (see previous assignment).
Reading: Albert Pope, "The Open City" and "Apparatus of Inclusion" in *Ladders*, p. 16-21.
Multi-Family Housing and Its Social Context: Private and Public Realms.
Discussion, New Hope Housing with Ernesto Maldonado.

March 24
Tour: A Slice across Houston-- Third Ward to River Oaks (including Project Row Houses and the Menil House).
Reading: Keith Krumweide, “SuperModel Homes” in *Cite Magazine 54.*

March 31
Discussion: The Shaping and Re-shaping of Neighborhoods.
Viewing: *This is our Home; it is Not for Sale* a film by Jon Schwartz.

April 7
Tour: A slice across Houston—Part two: Griggs Road to Riverside with several house visits.
Individual student meetings to discuss final presentations if needed.

April 14 (or may be scheduled after jury week):
Final Student Presentation: A comprehensive look at a single house or group of houses where historical significance, representation, and political/cultural forces align (or collide). A minimum of five pages with additional images or other visual support will be presented to the class and turned in.

GRADING CITERIA

A Exceptional work, beyond what is expected or required
B Above average work
C Acceptable work
D Unsatisfactory work

The semester grade will be determined as follows:

15%	Short Presentation #1
15%	Short Presentation #2
30%	Final Presentation
40%	Contribution to class discussion which reflects comprehensive attention to assigned readings (including submitted questions for discussion), regular attendance, and engagement in all aspects of field trips and viewings.